

**FITCHBURG PLANNING BOARD MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JULY 17, 2012**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paula Caron, Chair
John DiPasquale
Mike DiPietro
Paul Fontaine, Jr.
Mike Hurley
Andrew Van Hazinga

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kristin Sweeney Moore
Jeff Anderson (associate member)

PLANNING OFFICE: Mike O'Hara

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Veteran's Room, First Floor, City Hall.

Communications

Petition submitted re: offering for sale City-owned parcel on Airport Road. If there is a future development proposal, it will go before the Planning Board for site plan review.

APR parcels update – two city-owned parcels on Ashby West & Alpine Roads were designated for agricultural purposes when Fitchburg High School was built. Must be in active agricultural use. A proposal is pending to issue an RFP to sell parcels to a local farmer, subject to the Agricultural Preservation Restriction. Board will be informed as to future developments.

Meeting Minutes

Motion made & seconded to approve minutes of the June 26th Planning Board meeting.
Vote unanimous to approve.

Minor Site Plans

A.L. Prime, Rt. 2 - adding parking spaces
No show. Deferred to next month.

Public Hearings

Special Permit - McDonald's USA, LLC, freestanding sign exceeding 100 sq. ft., 550 Kimball St.
Ms. Caron informed applicant that only five Planning Board members were present when hearing opened; therefore, all five would need to vote in favor to be approved. They chose to go ahead with hearing. Luke DiStefano of Bohler Engineering & a McDonald's representative presented plans for the addition of a two-foot by nine-foot changeable readerboard sign under the main golden arches sign. It will not be a scrolling, electronic sign. This will make the total sign area greater than 100 sq. ft. which requires a Special Permit.

Motion made & seconded to close hearing. Vote unanimous.
Motion made & seconded to approve Special Permit.
Vote 5-0 to approve.

Special Permit - Christmas Oaks Development & Management, LLC, parking relief, 80 South St. (cont'd from 5/8/12)

Reconsideration of the ZBA's denial has been requested. There's been no hearing before ZBA yet.
Hearing continue to August.

OTHER BUSINESS

Extension of time to complete - Special Permit #2006-18, Parks-Cramer redevelopment, 68 Airport Rd. & 25 Newport St.

Brian Rehrig present to continue discussion about extending the Special Permit.

Discussion with Asst. City Solicitor was recapped. He had suggested bifurcating the special permit into a separate one for each project. A new notice & hearing would be required.

Brian doesn't think the outstanding conditions of Special Permit should be the responsibility of the front (Vogue Plaza) parcel, since they mostly relate to the development of the rear (Parks-Cramer) building. He is willing to let the Special Permit die, and re-apply when there is interest in starting the rest of the development.

Brian asked if they could use the vacant area to the left of the main driveway for temporary overflow parking when the karate studio & other businesses in the Vogue Plaza strip are busy. The plaza's current tenants are: River City Diner, karate studio, dance studio, hair salon, one vacant unit and the bar on the end unit.

Ms. Caron wanted a parking plan submitted for review, not just an open-ended approval.

Discussion on outside seating area – The Board had approved a modification a few years ago to allow outside seating in a fenced-in area to the right of the bar's entrance. Now, the seating has been placed in front of the building. Has been approved by License Commission? Will check w/ Bldg Commissioner.

Majority of Board is OK with using the area to the left of the Airport Road driveway for overflow parking, provided a plan is submitted showing:

- Temporary parking area
- Landscaping planter in front of site
- Outdoor seating at front of bar
- Planning Board review in two years

Brian will submit a site plan.

Ethier Street subdivision, lot releases & bond reduction

Brian Carlson was in to request release of more lots and to see if any reduction in the bond amount was possible. Finish paving to the end of the cul-de-sac is complete, sidewalk is in, needs street trees, loam & seed. Brian is planning to finish everything & start process for road acceptance this fall.

Mike had discussed with DPW-Engineering – they are comfortable with the Board keeping the \$25,421 and releasing the rest of the lots (Lot 2 thru 8) in the subdivision.

Motion made & seconded to retain the \$25K as the performance guarantee, and to release Lots 2 thru 8 from the subdivision covenant. Vote unanimous.

75 Day Street Student Housing - Landscaping plan

Atty. Vinnie Campobasso & Denny Jenks in to present landscaping plan for review.

Motion made & seconded to approve plan. Vote unanimous to approve.

They still are receiving interest in students, especially since FSU housing is now full. They plan to be open for the Fall semester.

Modification of Site Plan Approval - Lodging/Boarding house, 80 South St., Christmas Oaks Development and Management, LLC - proposed increase from 17 to 25 beds
ZBA has not re-heard this application as of yet.

The Board suggested looking into either Fitchburg Library or Fire Department Community Room for meeting space for when City Hall is eventually vacated.

Meeting adjourned: 7:11 p.m.

Next meeting: August 21, 2012

Minutes approved 8-21-12